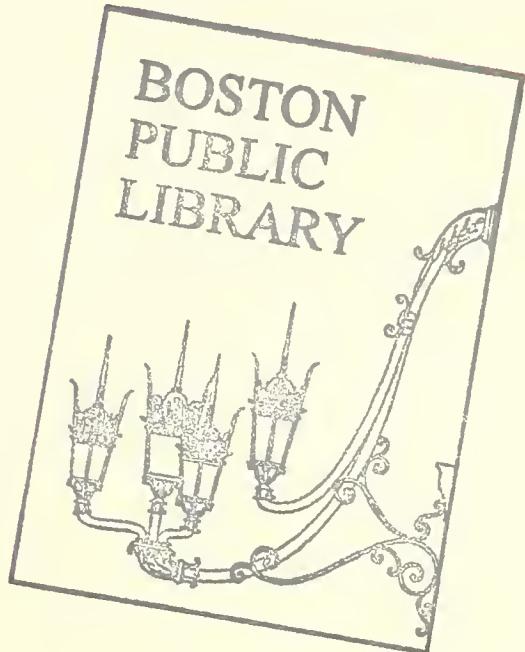


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Report of the Boston Landmarks Commission  
on the proposed designation of  
ARLINGTON STREET CHURCH

as a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975

approved Marcia Myers Feb. 21, 1978  
Executive Director date

accepted Pauline Chase Farrell Feb. 21, 1978  
Chairman date

BOSTON  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY



## 1.0 LOCATION OF THE PROPERTY

- 1.1 Address: at the northwest corner of Arlington and Boylston Streets; no number is given in city records. Located in Ward 5, Precinct 1, the building's parcel number is 1227.
- 1.2 Area in which the Property is located: Arlington Street Church is located in Back Bay, a late 19th century landfill area containing mostly row houses laid out on streets fitting a French Second Empire style grid pattern.

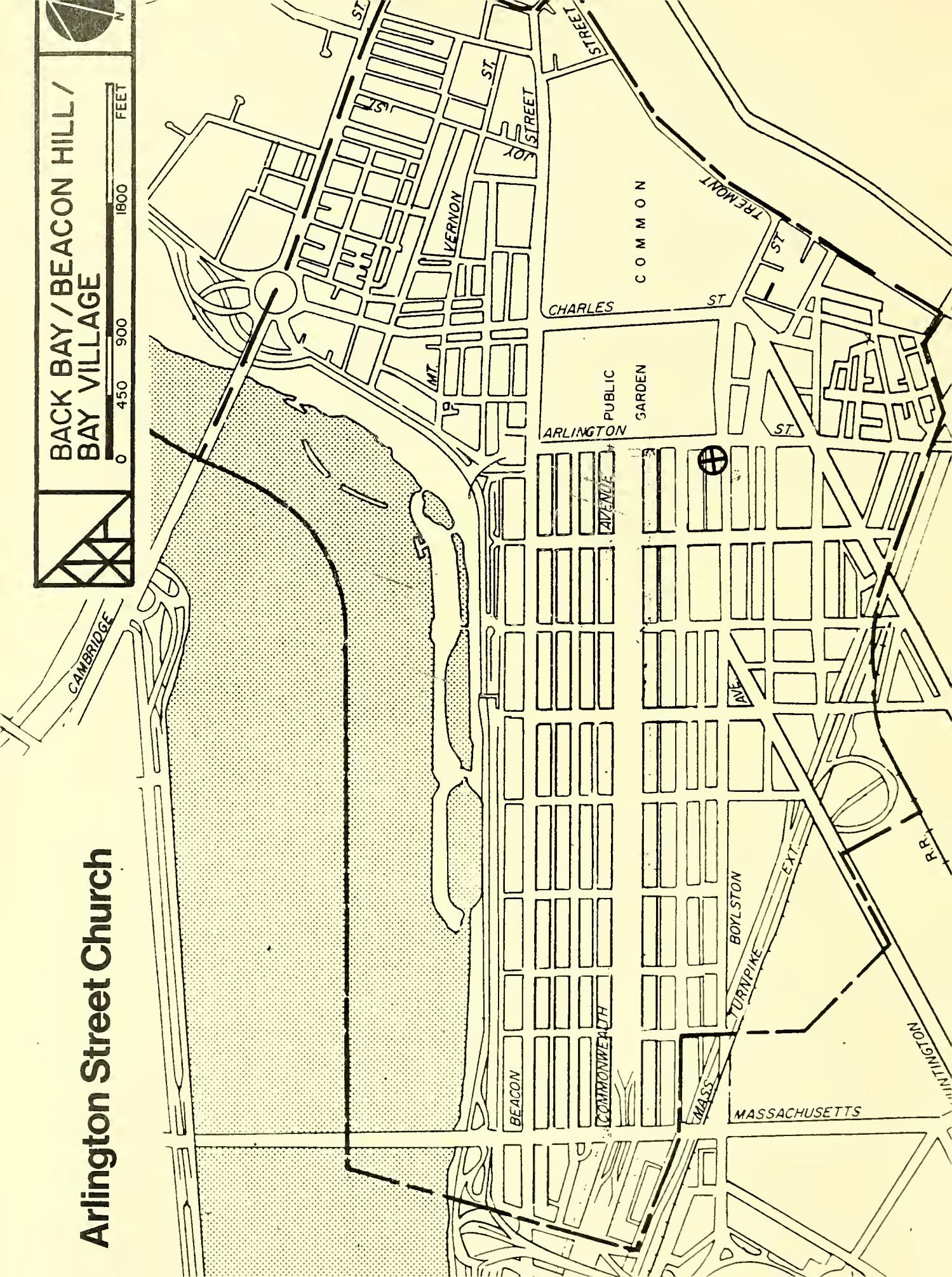
This part of Boston was marshland from the founding of the town until a poorly engineered tidal dam and railroad causeways created a sanitation hazard in the area. Fill of the marshes was ordered by the legislature in 1852, and the project, begun in 1857, reached Gravelly Point (now Kenmore Square) by 1890. A residential district which has long been an upper-class precinct, Back Bay in recent years has seen changes to a largely transient and student population.

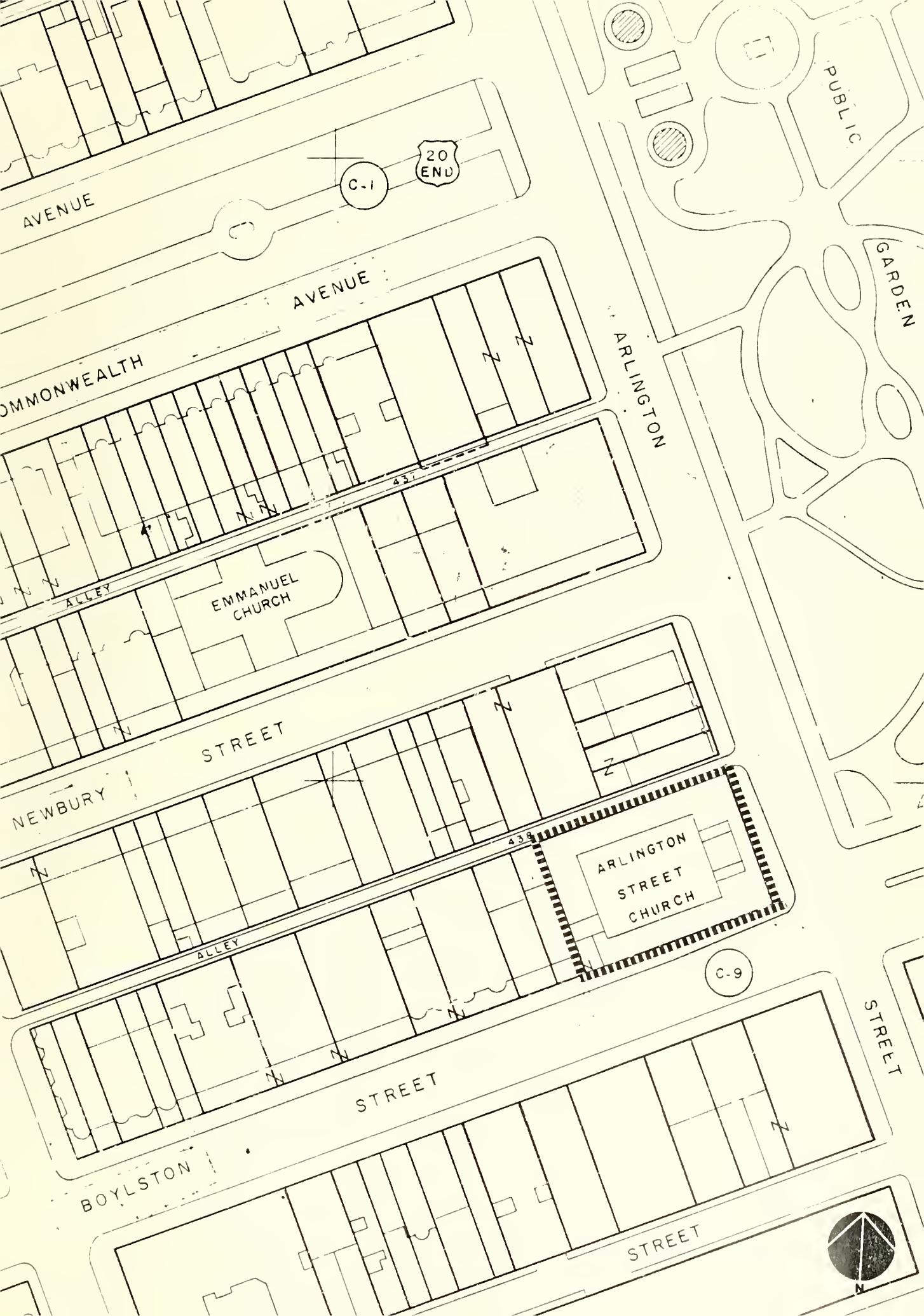
- 1.3 Map Showing Location: attached.

# Arlington Street Church



BACK BAY / BEACON HILL /  
BAY VILLAGE





## 2.0 DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Type and Use:

Arlington Street Church is a house of worship used by the congregation that built it in 1860-61, a Unitarian community that moved from a Federal Street church built by Charles Bulfinch. The congregation uses the church for its services, and in addition numerous social service agencies are headquartered at the church. On occasion, concerts and other special events also take place here.

### 2.2 Physical Description:

The Arlington Street Church occupies a corner lot facing the Public Garden, at the entrance to the Back Bay, and measures 70 feet on Arlington Street and 160 feet on Boylston Street.

The church is a two-and-one-half story structure of symmetrical plan with a pitched slate-covered roof, projecting entrance porch, and steeple rising to a height of 190 feet. The exterior is entirely sheathed in New Jersey brownstone ashlar, and displays architectural embellishment derived from 16th century Italian Renaissance and 18th century English sources.

The lateral walls of the church are composed of two banks of five windows each. The first story windows are capped with segmental-arched lintels, while those of the second story are round-arched. The projecting porch forming the entrance to the church is framed by corner pilasters supporting a central pediment, and the main doorway is surmounted by a glazed lunette and framed between monumental, engaged columns of a composite order.

Above the porch rises the steeple, patterned after that of St. Martin-in-the-Fields in London (designed by James Gibbs. Its superstructure is built up in five stages and terminates in a columned octahedral lantern and steep spire, stylistically akin to the steeple of the Park Street Church (visible across Boston Common from Arlington Street).

The interior of the church continues to show the strong influence of 18th century English and American models. It is divided into a nave and two side aisles by a range of 35-foot Corinthian columns; this same order is also used in pilasters along the walls. Galleries flank the side walls of the second story and a choir loft and organ (with original case) occupy the rear space at this level. From the columns on each side of the nave spring five arches, which in turn support a vaulted ceiling ornamented with caissons and rich plaster decoration.

Other features include box pews made of chestnut and lined with old crimson damask; 13 Tiffany windows; a 16-bell set of chimes in the steeple; and a 26 by 50-foot chapel attached to the rear of the church and entered from Boylston Street.

## 2.3 Physical History

The lot on which the church building stands was purchased by the Properties of the Meeting House in Federal Street on December 30, 1858, from James Read, Marshall S. Perry, and Samuel E. Guild. Purchase price was \$2,368.85. (Suffolk Co. Registry of Deeds, Lib. 749, Fol. 266). Immediately before transmitting the deed to the church, Reed et. al. obtained permission to erect a meeting house from the Commonwealth for \$1.00; Back Bay deed restrictions required such special permission for any building not meeting the massing requirements. (The Read group had purchased the land on October 4, 1858, from George Goss, who had that day obtained title from the Commonwealth).

Construction began on September 3, 1859. The cornerstone was laid May 28, 1860; the spire and vane were completed September 11, 1861; and the church was dedicated the following December 11. (Wakefield, p. 12)

The church also purchased a lot next door, but a planned parsonage was not built, and the lot was sold. However, the church bought that same lot, with building, from the Franklin Savings Bank on November 24, 1943 (Lib. 6069, Fol. 134); this building at 355 Boylston Street is used for offices and other related activities.

On June 21, 1976, the church granted the Massachusetts Historical Commission a preservation restriction for a period of 30 years. The restriction was given under the terms of a National Park Service matching grant-in-aid; the church must "preserve the architectural and historical integrity of the features, materials, appearance, workmanship, and environment" until June 21, 2006. (Lib. 8880, Fol. 81)

## 2.4 Photographs: attached

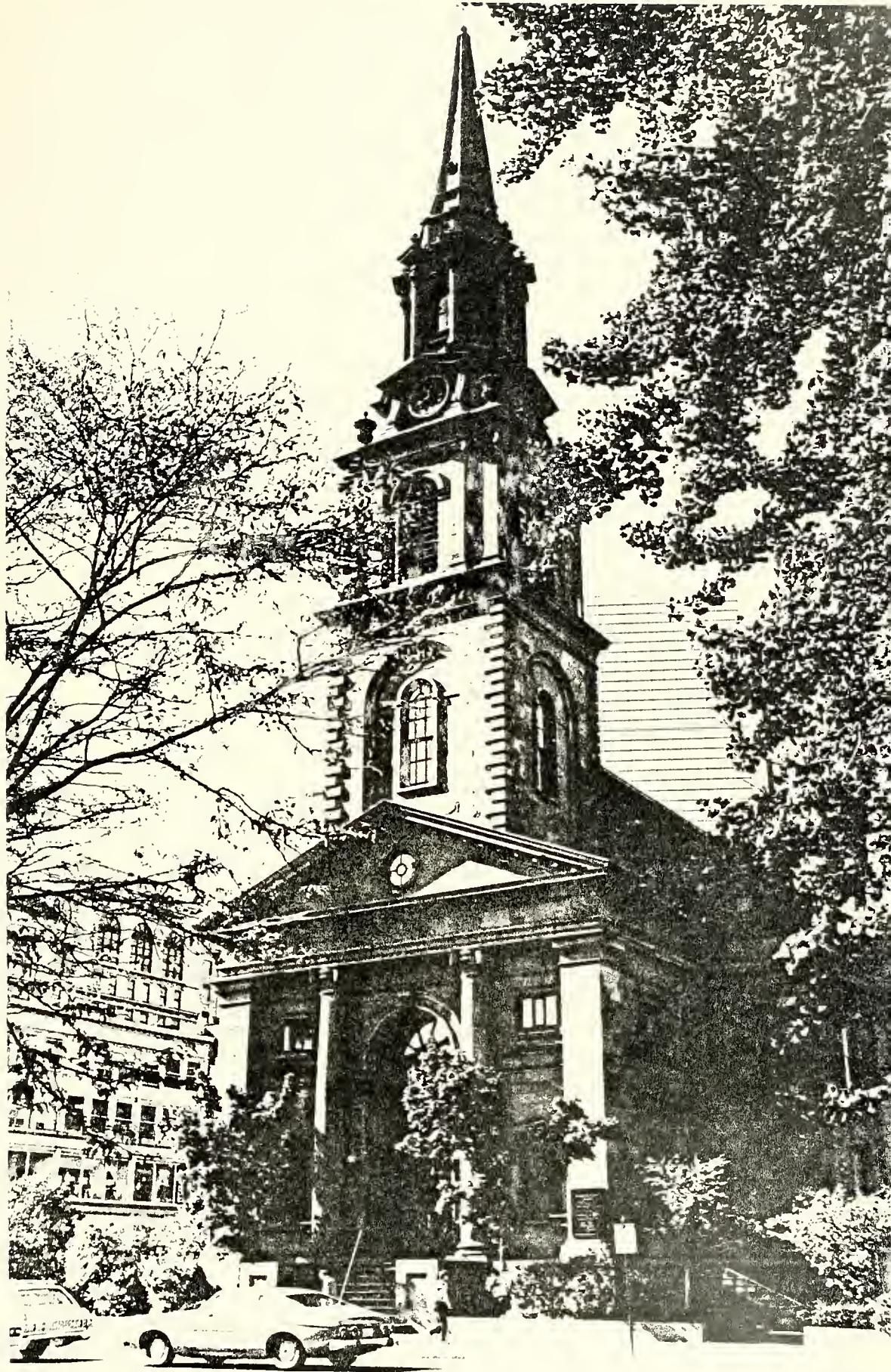


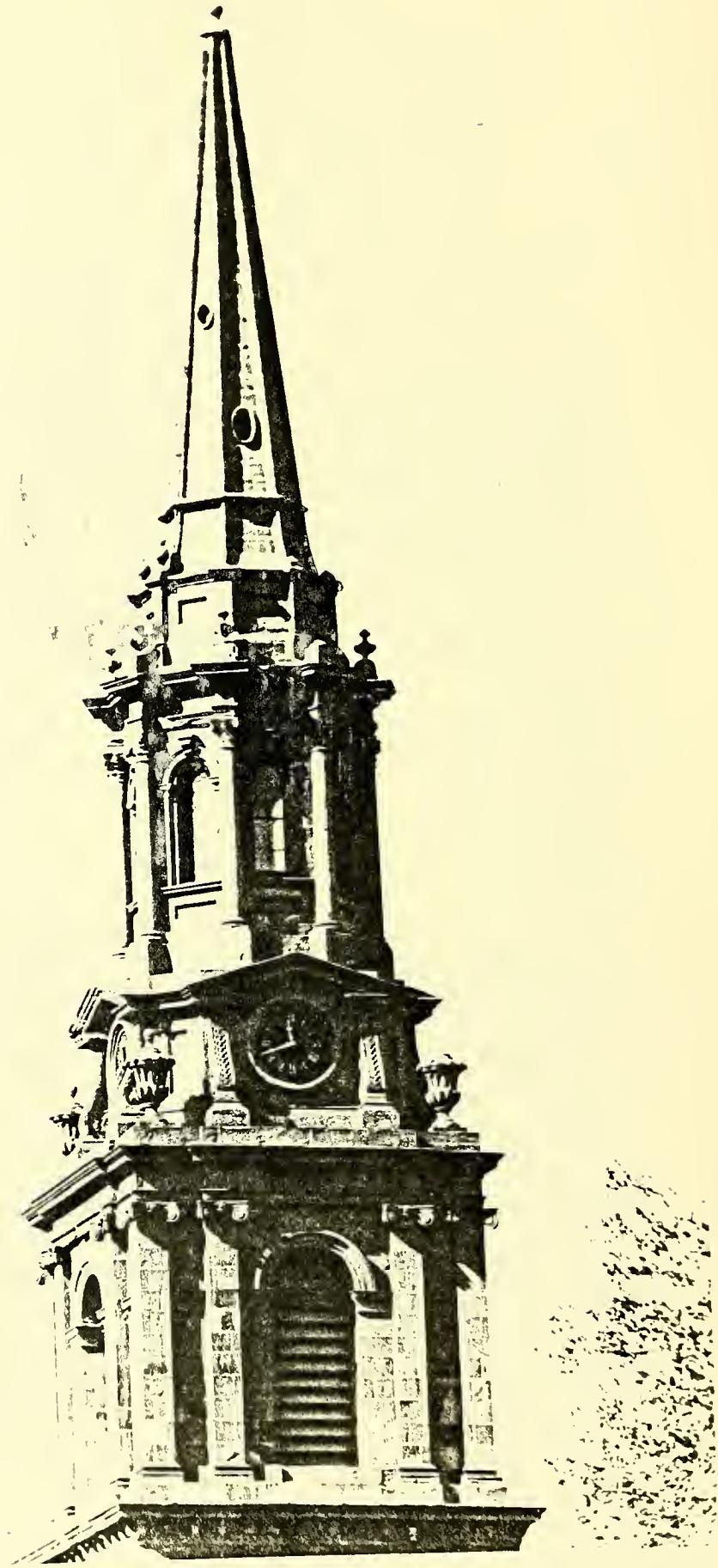
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<http://www.archive.org/details/reportofbostonla78bost>

ARLINGTON STREET CHURCH  
facade and steeple

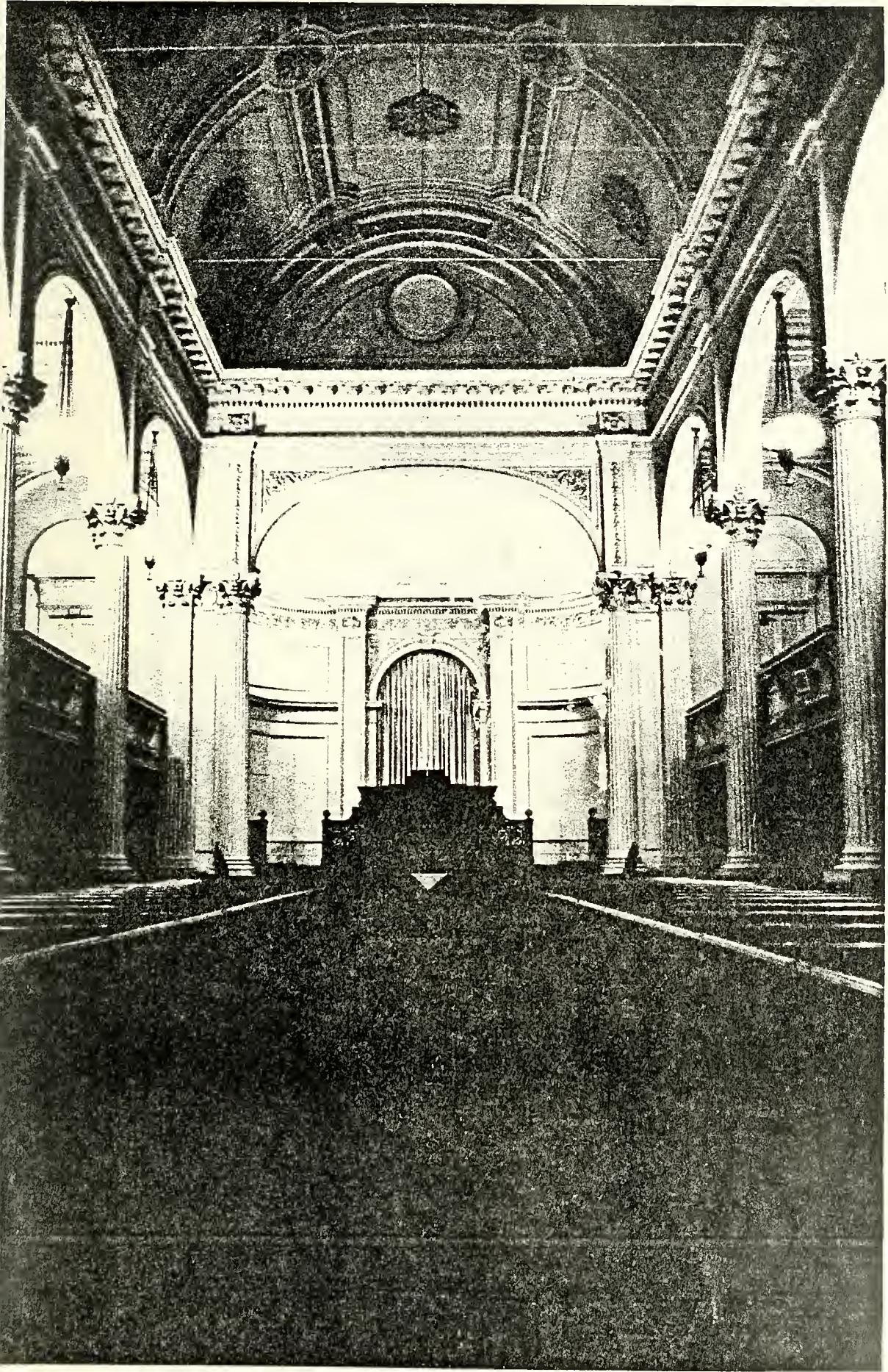
photo Oct '77 R.P. Burke





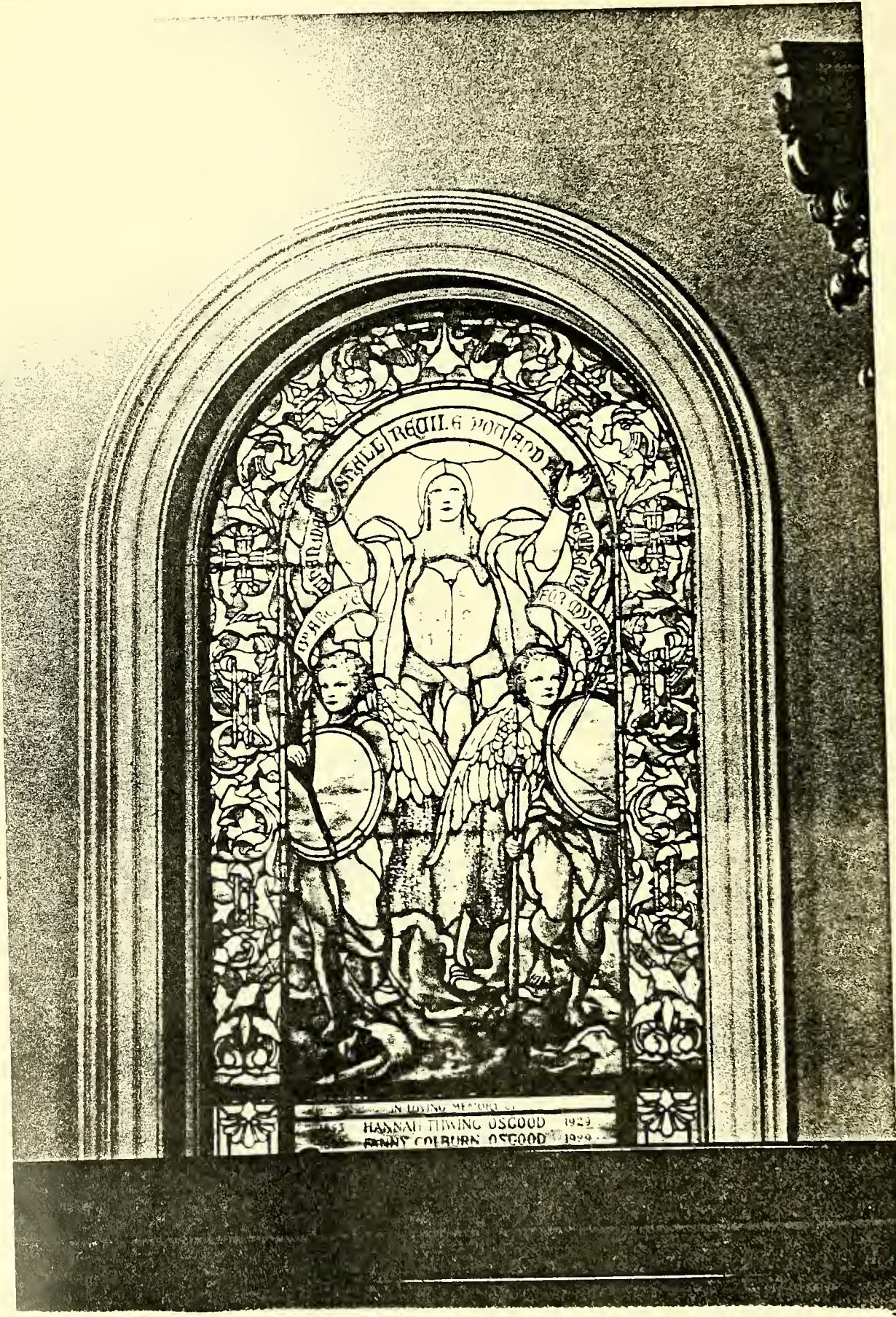
ARLINGTON STREET CHURCH  
spire

photo Oct '77 R.P. Burke



ARLINGTON STREET CHURCH  
interior

photo Jan '78 R.P. Burke



ARLINGTON STREET CHURCH  
Osgood memorial Tiffany  
window

### 3.0 SIGNIFICANCE

#### 3.1 Architectural Associations

The architectural significance of the Arlington Street Church lies in three areas: as an example of Georgian style architecture designed between the two principal periods of its use; as the first church constructed in Back Bay; and as the work of Arthur Gilman, the prominent Boston architect who also drew up the overall Back Bay street plan.

Architectural style: Undeniably the design of Arlington Street Church derives from Georgian period architecture in England and America.

The model for this church, as for so many others in America through the 18th and 19th centuries, is the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields in London, England, designed in 1722-26 by James Gibbs. Many colonial architects used Gibbs' pattern book, which contained plates illustrating architectural features and designs to scale (prominently featuring plates of St. Martin's). Architects frequently combined varying pattern book designs for different sections of the building, often retaining features from local architectural traditions -- particularly in New England, the use of frame construction. At the time of the construction of Arlington Street (1861), at least two outstanding examples of the St. Martin's derivative had long been standing: Christ Church in Philadelphia (1727-40) and First Baptist Church in Providence, R.I. (1775).

By the beginning of the 19th century, the Georgian style in church architecture was on the wane. Among the latest examples of the Gibbs-style church in New England include: the Center Church in New Haven, Connecticut, designed by Boston architect Asher Benjamin in 1814 with some details from the newly emergent Federal period; and the Old Lyme Congregational Church, designed in 1817 by Samuel Belcher. Not until the Colonial Revival (with its various derivatives) took hold in the 1890's did the style reappear with any degree of prominence in New England.

Thus, the question is whether the Arlington Street Church, built midway between these two style phases, constitutes a "Georgian revival or survival." (Bunting, p. 321). In addressing the question, Bunting points to two Commonwealth Avenue houses which "... illustrate the tenacity of the Georgian tradition in Boston and the fact that it did not die out during the height of Victorian taste." (ibid., caption).

However, a contemporary newspaper account of the building's design (written anonymously, as was newspaper custom of the time, but clearly by someone closely involved with the plan) casts the church's design more as a conscious attempt at revival:

"The style chosen by the architects is somewhat remarkable, as presenting a return to those solid and classical principles which were characteristic of the churches of a former age, but which have not been put in practice among us . . . since the period of the Revolution." (Transcript, p. 1)

The choice of style was also dictated by the perceived needs of the Protestant liturgy. In contrast with the Catholic-Anglican style, with its "Gothic buildings---long, narrow, and high . . . intended mainly for processions, or for imposing spectacles, where the sight only of the officiating priests at the high altar were deemed sufficient for the worshippers . . . (a Protestant church) on the other hand, requires that the congregation shall be able to sit at ease through several hours, and both hear and see the preacher without inconvenience." (ibid.)

The use of an ornate Corinthian order on the interior capitals suggests influence from the Italian Renaissance, a connection alluded to in the contemporary newspaper account and further evidenced by Gilman's claim of a direct influence from the Church of Sta. Annunziata at Genoa. (Kilham, p. 68f)

Whether Arlington Street is "from the viewpoint of history . . . the first harbinger of the Georgian revival . . ." (Whiffen, p. 160) or an attempt to revive a style for the other churches to be erected in Back Bay (an attempt that failed), the church remains "... certainly one of the best architectural ornaments in the city." (Kilham, ibid.)

First church in Back Bay: The Arlington Street Church was completed less than one year ahead of the next oldest Back Bay church, Emmanuel Church (1862). The churches that moved to the area did so to be in the same area as their members; the city's population was moving away from the increasingly commercialized downtown area.

Thus the Back Bay part of the 19th century. The Federal Street Unitarians moved to Arlington Street in 1861. Other parishes that moved from downtown include: Central Congregational, from Winter Street to Berkeley and Newbury in 1867; First Church, from Chauncy Place to Berkeley and Marlborough in 1868; Brattle Square Church to Clarendon and Commonwealth Avenue in 1871; Old South Church from Washington Street to Copley Square in 1875; Trinity Church, from Summer Street to Copley Square in 1877 (a move planned before the 1872 Boston Fire that destroyed the Summer Street building); Second Church, from the North End to Boylston Street in 1874 (a church now demolished); and Hollis Street Church, to Newbury and Exeter in 1884 (demolished in 1966).

New congregations were established in Back Bay as well: Emmanuel Church in 1862 and the First Spiritualist Temple in 1885 (now the Exeter Street Theatre). Except for this last, all the 19th century Back Bay churches represented the three denominations of the period's

privileged classes: Unitarian, Congregational and Episcopal. Later, other denominations purchased buildings from dissolved parishes: First Baptist Church obtained Brattle Square Church, and the Presbyterian Church of the Covenant obtained the Central Congregational. The last new congregation, First Lutheran, erected a modern church in 1957 at Berkeley and Marlborough.

Work of Arthur Gilman: The influence of Arthur Gilman in Boston is reflected both in his individual buildings and in the overall plan of Back Bay.

Born in 1821 at Newburyport, Mass., Gilman left Trinity College in 1840 for a period of travel. In Paris, where the world's only systematic education in architecture was available, Gilman studied the work of the Baron Haussmann, who had redesigned the streets of Paris under Napoleon III. Similar work by the French Academy, and especially the addition to the Louvre art museum in Paris established a whole French Second Empire style characterized by mansarded buildings and wide axial boulevards.

Gilman was responsible for the Back Bay street layout, considered the first such French Academic urban design in America. A similar stylistic derivation by the association of Gilman and Gridley J.F. Bryant is the old Boston City Hall (1820-65); in addition, the row at 20-36 Commonwealth Avenue of similar style was designed by the Gilman-Bryant association.

Gilman's plan for the Arlington Street Church is curious in light of his documented disdain for "classical" forms, even though the church's plan reflects influence from such forms. "He disliked classic revivals and called the United States Capitol and Boston State House 'those flaunting and meretricious edifices,' and termed Stuart and Revett's famous work The Antiquities of Athens 'that inexhaustible quarry of bad taste.'" (Kilham, p. 69) "Classical," in the sense of the Transcript article, perhaps is included in New England rather than Greek parameters.

Gilman both worked in Boston and traveled abroad from 1843 until 1867, the year of his move to New York. "It is a great pity that Gilman did not record his travel impressions and his later thoughts on architecture. Not only would they have settled many questions regarding Boston's indebtedness to France, but they would have made lively reading." (Bunting, p. 78) Lively, perhaps, judging from King's Dictionary's description of Gilman as "that famous wit and bon vivant."

### 3.2 Historic Associations

Arlington Street Church is significant as one of the most prominent Unitarian church communities in the United States: the modern-day home of the congregation once led by William Ellery Channing, leader of the formal establishment of Unitarianism in America.

Although theological disputes over the doctrine of the Trinity took place as early as the fourth and fifth centuries, the Unitarian movement in America traces its roots to a post-Reformation movement in Poland and England. The first church in America to declare itself formally Unitarian, King's Chapel in Boston, did not do so until 1785; however, by 1780 Unitarian philosophy had in fact taken over most of Boston's oldest churches. Reasons for this influence included the anti-intellectualism of the so-called Great Awakening movement, led by the itinerant evangelist George Whitefield, and of the established puritan orthodox churches; support of the American Revolution by English Unitarians; and a relaxed attitude to doctrinal conformity in order to increase church membership. The formal schism between Unitarian and Congregational churches in New England was begun by the appointment of the Rev. Henry Ware, a Unitarian, to a traditionally orthodox professorship at Harvard.

The community now at Arlington Street began as a Presbyterian church organized by a group of Scottish Calvinists, and located in Long Lane on November 15, 1727. In 1787, the church changed its form of government from Presbyterian to Congregational, a shift parallel to a change today from city to town government. Also, by this time the Unitarian wave had taken over the Long Lane Church, and in 1787 the Rev. Jeremy Belknap, its first Unitarian pastor, published a collection of hymns and psalms with references to the divinity of Jesus deleted. (A famous revision of the Book of Common Prayer was done two years earlier by the Rev. James Freeman, pastor at King's Chapel; there that version is still in use, and that parish still retains its Anglican-style liturgy in contrast to its once-Puritan and Calvinist fellow Unitarian churches.) Also, the Massachusetts Convention met there in 1788 to ratify the new United States Constitution; in honor of the event, the name of Long Lane was changed to Federal Street.

Most renowned of all ministers at Federal Street was the Rev. William Ellery Channing, (1780-1842), the principal apologist for Unitarianism in the United States. Installed as pastor at Federal Street in 1803, his "natural and amiable system, against which no man's understanding, or conscience, or charity, or piety revolts", was aimed at bringing Christianity in harmony with the times. This philosophy was of the intuitive school: the intuition of the soul was equally valuable to senses and experience as a source of knowledge. From this developed the Transcendentalist school, championed by George Ripley, the ex-minister who founded the Brook Farm utopia, and by Ralph Waldo Emerson, who resigned a pastorate because his intuitive sense of spiritual truth could not be expressed in such church forms as the communion service.

Channing received his greatest fame as speaker and writer on both church and social issues. Given at an 1819 ordination in Baltimore, where the first Unitarian church outside eastern Massachusetts was being established, Channing's sermon "Unitarian Christianity" was the strongest apologetic for the Unitarian philosophy. Channing

believed that the human mind is on its own able to comprehend the Scriptures: ". . . the Bible is a book written for men, in the language of men, and that its meaning is to be sought in the same manner as that of other books." (Channing, p. 3) He thus argued that such traditional doctrines as the Trinity and forgiveness as a function of Christ's death were violations of common sense. Finally, he caused an uproar among his religious adversaries by referring to other faiths as" . . . gross and cherished corruptions." (ibid., p. 42)

Under Channing's leadership, social issues also became a concern of the church. In spite of his reluctance, Channing spoke out on such issues as slavery and public education. Since man's natural rights are of divine origin, preached Channing, the state, which does not create such rights, can only violate them. Thus slavery, legal or not, violated divine law, and Channing felt bound to speak out against it: he was "reluctantly drawn into controversy, which to him was a supposed necessity---never a choice." (Peabody in Memorial History, iii, 474)

The Parish at Federal Street prospered under Channing's leadership, and could afford the land and large building in the new Back Bay development. The move, made by most downtown churches to follow population shifts, was made in 1861, and the last church on Federal Street, designed by Bulfinch, was abandoned.

Two other churches have merged with Arlington Street in this century. In 1941, the Church of the Disciples, Unitarian, merged with Arlington Street after a century as a separate church. The Second Universalist Society, which began worship in union with Arlington Street in 1935, formally merged with the Arlington Street Church corporation in 1967.

In recent years, Arlington Street's pulpit has been held by several distinguished pastors. From 1900 to 1926, the Reverend Paul Revere Frothingham, a descendant of Revere, was pastor; the Reverend Samuel Eliot, son of Harvard president Charles Eliot, followed after his retirement from the presidency of the American Unitarian Association.

Best known among 20th century ministers is the Reverend Dana McLean Greeley, who served Arlington Street from 1935 to 1958, when he assumed the presidency of the American Unitarian Association. In 1962, Greeley was elected the first president of the Unitarian Universalist Association; he held that office until 1969, when he retired to become minister of First Parish in Concord, Mass. Among his personal honors have been selection as president of the International Association for Religious Freedom, vice president of the World Conference of Religious for Peace, and co-chairman of the Interreligious Peace Commission and the Massachusetts Council of Churches.

The church continues its social concerns, a function that dates back to Channing's time. During the 1960's, Arlington Street was center of activity for the church sanctuary for draft evaders movement. Today numerous social and religious organizations are quartered here: the Samaritans, an organization specializing in suicide prevention and similar aid for the emotionally troubled; Dignity, an organization for homosexual Roman Catholics; the New England Gay Caucus; adult literacy classes; SCIPS, an elderly group; Mobilization for Survival; and others. At the adjacent church office, Gallery 355 displays contemporary art.

### 3.3 Relationship to the criteria for Landmark designation

The Arlington Street Church qualifies for Landmark designation under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 under the following criteria:

as a property listed on the National Register of Historic Places, an action that took effect May 4, 1973;

as a structure identified prominently with an important aspect of the cultural and social history of the city;

as a structure embodying distinctive characteristics of a type inherently valuable for study, and as the work of an architect whose work influenced the development of the city, the commonwealth and the nation.

#### 4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS

The Arlington Street Church is owned by the Arlington Street Church corporation, whose members are the members of the church community. As a house of religious worship, the church and its property are exempt from city property tax under exemption Code 11. The total assessment for the property is \$800,000: this assessment is divided into \$540,900 for the land and \$259,100 for the buildings.

Church membership numbers 230 (UUA Directory), and the membership and strong local commitment imply a continuing commitment to the church and to Arlington Street.

## 5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

### 5.1 Background:

From its inception, the Back Bay was planned as both a major civic improvement and a substantial residential district. There was not only concern over the sanitary conditions in the area, but also over crowding in the existing residential sections of the city. Boston's population had increased a full 33 percent from 1840 to 1850, adding pressure both on space and on the sewage disposal system, which dumped into the stagnant Back Bay. The development attracted many of the city's leading families, and the handsome townhouses and mansions reflected the tastes of its fashionable and affluent clientele. Cultural institutions and churches also added dignity to the area.

The original deed restrictions against incompatible land uses, more recently replaced by zoning, have protected sizeable sections of the area against commercial encroachment. In 1966, after much dispute over early '60's plans for high-rise development along Commonwealth Avenue, the legislature created the Back Bay Residential District and the Back Bay Architectural Commission, a design review board. In 1974, the District was expanded and renamed the Back Bay Architectural District.

Developed as an upper-class district, Back Bay today is predominantly home for young adults and students. In recent years there has been an influx of families with children, and with consolidation of many of the small schools, the college-age population has leveled off and possibly even declined. Housing is predominantly a mix of quality apartment buildings, lodging houses, and dormitories. Owner-occupancy in 1970 was 8 percent.

### 5.2 Planning Issues:

As identified in a report by the Boston Redevelopment Authority entitled, "Back Bay-Beacon Hill-Bay Village District Profile and Proposed 1978-80 Neighborhood Improvement Program," the principal planning issues facing Back Bay are:

- . preservation of housing stock
- . commercial area needs
- . neighborhood capital improvements
- . impact of downtown redevelopment projects
- . institutional expansion and contraction
- . traffic congestion and parking

Arlington Street Church occupies a parcel which, because of its location on a prime commercial corner facing the Public Garden, has considerable residential or commercial development potential. The 30-year preservation restriction, given to the Massachusetts Historical Commission under terms of a matching grant-in-aid from the National

Park Service, serves to relieve what development pressure may exist on the site. Beyond this period, which expires in 2006, the future of the church building is directly dependent on the church community it serves. Any prediction on the pressures facing the church community that far into the future would be tenuous at best; however, factors such as the adjacent Back Bay Architectural District, the preservation restriction on the church and the relative stability of the area over the last 30 years point to continuing stability.

Two major issues that will affect the future of the church, restriction or not, are those of church consolidation and the still-to-be-built Park Plaza redevelopment project. Two other churches, the Church of the Disciples and the Second Universalist, have merged with Arlington Street Church since 1941. Other consolidations have taken place in Back Bay as well: Second Church has merged with First Church, Unitarian, and the Old South Church has accepted the Mt. Vernon Church into its congregation. Such consolidations can present a use problem for the church buildings of smaller congregations. Although Second Church, Second Universalist and Church of the Disciples were able to find users for their old buildings (Ruggles St. Baptist, St. Clement's Roman Catholic, and Seventh-day Adventist respectively), the Mt. Vernon Church structure at Beacon Street and Massachusetts Avenue remains vacant. Arlington Street Church is located in a zoning district that permits considerably more floor space than the church building contains. The additional permissible floor space, known as unused development rights, can be a temptation to demolish or substantially alter an existing building in a similar situation. This long-term concern (which should not be an issue in the preservation of the church until the current preservation restriction terminates in 2006) might be addressed by a transfer of the unused development rights of this parcel to another parcel, thus enabling the owners of the building to realize some income from the developable potential of the property.

The Park Plaza redevelopment project will have considerable effect on the entire neighborhood, including the church. In addition to increasing land values, density and pedestrian traffic, the project will affect local urban design characteristics such as open space, shadows and wind. The visual prominence of Arlington Street Church, among other characteristics, can be affected by the design characteristics of adjacent new buildings. A new developer, yet to be designated by the BRA, may be a potential buyer of the church's development rights.

### 5.3 Relationship to zoning and design controls:

The area in which Arlington Street Church is situated is zoned as B-10-155: a general business district, with a maximum floor area ratio of 10 and a height limit of 155 feet. An attempt to down-zone the property to B-4-70 in 1977 was opposed by the church; the zoning amendment was not adopted.

Use as a house of worship is allowable in all areas, and the church's floor-area ratio is nowhere near the allowable limit. Height of the church is above the allowable limit, but church spires are specifically exempted from any maximum height limits. Thus, the church conforms to the city's zoning code.

No statutory design controls are in effect on the church: although located in Back Bay, it is not within the Back Bay Architectural District. The only control exercised is by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, which holds a preservation restriction extending until June 30, 2006, and enforceable under Chapter 184, Section 32 of the Massachusetts General Laws.

## 6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

Because the Arlington Street Church is located within the area in which district designation under Chapter 772 is prohibited, the Landmarks Commission's choice for action is limited to designation of the church as a Landmark.

Another possibility is to recommend the expansion of the state-created Back Bay Architectural District to include the church. This action, because it would affect only one municipality in the state, must be approved by the city council and mayor of Boston, both branches of the state legislature, and the governor, as provided in the home rule amendment to the state constitution. The Landmarks Commission may recommend such an action, but it would not be directly involved in the process of expansion of the district.

Finally, the Commission may choose not to designate the church, and take no other action.

## 7.0 RECOMMENDATION

The staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the Arlington Street Church be designated a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975.

Recommended standards and criteria for enforcement of the Commissions' design review are attached. Boundaries of the designation should conform to those delineating the parcel known as Assessors's Parcel No. 1227, Ward 5.

## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT ON STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

### Boston Landmarks Commission

Per Sections 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the enabling statute (Chapter 772 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for 1975), Standards and Criteria must be adopted for each Landmark Designation which shall be applied by the Commission in evaluating proposed changes to the property. Before a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption can be issued for such changes, the changes must be reviewed by the Commission with regard to their conformance to the purposes of the statute.

The Standards and Criteria established thus note those features which must be conserved and/or enhanced to maintain the viability of the Landmark Designation. The intent of these guidelines is to help local officials, designers, and individual property owners to identify the characteristics that have led to designation, and thus to identify the limitation to the changes that can be made to them.

It should be emphasized that conformance to the Standards and Criteria alone does not necessarily insure approval, nor are they absolute, but any request for variance from them must demonstrate the reasons for, and advantages gained by, such variance. The Commission's Certificate of Design Approval is only granted after careful review of each application and public hearing, in accordance with the statute.

As intended by the statute a wide variety of buildings and features are included within the area open to Landmark Designation, and an equally wide range exists in the latitude allowed for change. Some properties of truly exceptional architectural and/or historical value will permit only the most minor modifications, while for some others the Commission encourages changes and additions with a contemporary approach, consistent with the properties' existing features and changed uses.

In general, the intent of the Standards and Criteria is to preserve existing qualities that cause designation of a property; however, in some cases they have been so structured as to encourage the removal of additions that have lessened the integrity of the property.

It is recognized that changes will be required in designated properties for a wide variety of reasons, all of which are not under the complete control of the Commission or the owners. Primary examples are:

- a) Building code conformance and safety requirements.
- b) Changes necessitated by the introduction of modern mechanical and electrical systems.
- c) Changes due to proposed new uses of a property.

The response to these requirements may, in some cases, present conflicts with the Standards and Criteria for a particular property. The Commission's evaluation of an application will be based upon the degree to which such changes are in harmony with the character of the property.

In some cases, priorities have been assigned within the Standards and Criteria as an aid to property owners in identifying the most critical design features.

The Standards and Criteria have been divided into two levels: (1) the general ones that are common to almost all landmark designations (with three different categories for buildings, building interiors and landscape features); and (2) those specific ones that apply to each particular property that is designated. In every case the Specific Standards and Criteria for a particular property shall take precedence over the General ones if there is a conflict.

GENERAL STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES  
DESIGNATED AS LANDMARKS by the Boston Landmarks Commission

A. APPROACH

1. The design approach to the property should begin with the premise that the features of historical and architectural significance described within the Study Report must be preserved. In general this will minimize the exterior alterations that will be allowed.
2. Changes and additions to the property and its environment which have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected. ("Later integral features" shall be the term used to convey this concept.)
3. Deteriorated material or architectural features, whenever possible, should be repaired rather than replaced or removed.
4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary it should be based on physical or documentary evidence of original or later integral features.
5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture and other visual qualities. Imitation replacement materials are not allowed.
6. New additions or alterations should not disrupt the essential form and integrity of the property and should be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property and its environment.
7. New additions should be contemporary in design, not imitative of an earlier style or period.

8. New additions or alterations should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.
9. Priority shall be given to those portions of the property which are visible from public ways or which it can be reasonably inferred may be in the future.
10. Color will be considered as part of specific standards and criteria that apply to a particular property.

B. EXTERIOR WALLS

I MASONRY

1. Whenever possible, original masonry and mortar should be retained.
2. Duplicate original mortar in composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile and method of application.
3. Repair and replace deteriorated masonry with material which matches as closely as possible.
4. When necessary to clean masonry, use gentlest method possible. Do not sandblast. Doing so changes the visual quality of the material and accelerates deterioration. Test patches should always be carried out well in advance of cleaning (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
5. Avoid applying waterproofing or water repellent coatings to masonry, unless required to solve a specific problem. Such coatings can accelerate deterioration.
6. In general, do not paint masonry surfaces. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some point in the history of the property.

## General Standards and Criteria

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### II NON-MASONRY

1. Retain and repair original or later integral material whenever possible.
2. Retain and repair, when necessary, deteriorated material with material that matches.

### C. ROOFS

1. Preserve the integrity of the original or later integral roof shape.
2. Retain original roof covering whenever possible.
3. Whenever possible, replace deteriorated roof covering with material which matches the old in composition, size, shape, color, texture, and installation detail.
4. Preserve architectural features which give the roof its character, such as cornices, gutters, iron filigree, cupolas, dormers, brackets.

### D. WINDOWS AND DOORS

1. Retain original and later integral door and window openings where they exist. Do not enlarge or reduce door and window openings for the purpose of fitting stock window sash or doors, or air conditioners.
2. Whenever possible, repair and retain original or later integral window elements such as sash, lintels, sills, architraves, glass, shutters and other decorations and hardware. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
3. On some properties consideration will be given to changing from the original window details to other expressions such as to a minimal anonymous treatment by the use of a single light, when consideration of cost, energy conservation or appropriateness override the desire for historical accuracy. In such cases, consideration must be given to the resulting effect on the interior as well as the exterior of the building.

E. PORCHES, STEPS AND EXTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

1. Retain and repair porches and steps that are original or later integral features including such items as railings, balusters, columns, posts, brackets, roofs, ironwork, benches, fountains, statues and decorative items.

F. SIGNS, MARQUEES AND AWNINGS

1. Signs, marquees and awnings integral to the building ornamentation or architectural detailing shall be retained and repaired where necessary.
2. New signs, marquees and awnings shall not detract from the essential form of the building nor obscure its architectural features.
3. New signs, marquees and awnings shall be of a size and material compatible with the building and its current use.
4. Signs, marquees and awnings applied to the building shall be applied in such a way that they could be removed without damaging the building.
5. All signs added to the building shall be part of one system of design, or reflect a design concept appropriate to the communication intent.
6. Lettering forms or typeface will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally shall either be contemporary or relate to the period of the building or its later integral features.
7. Lighting of signs will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally illumination of a sign shall not dominate illumination of the building.
8. The foregoing notwithstanding, signs are viewed as the most appropriate vehicle for imaginative and creative expression, especially in structures being reused for purposes different from the original, and it is not the Commission's intent to stifle a creative approach to signage.

G PENTHOUSES

1. The objective of preserving the integrity of the original or later integral roof shape shall provide the basic criteria in judging whether a penthouse can be added to a roof. Height of a building, prominence of roof form, and visibility shall govern whether a penthouse shall be approved.
2. Minimizing or eliminating the visual impact of the penthouse is the general objective and the following guidelines shall be followed:
  - a) Location shall be selected where the penthouse is not visible from the street or adjacent buildings; setbacks shall be utilized.
  - b) Overall height or other dimensions shall be kept to a point where the penthouse is not seen from the street or adjacent buildings.
  - c) Exterior treatment shall relate to the materials, color and texture of the building or to other materials integral to the period and character of the building, typically used for appendages.
  - d) Openings in a penthouse shall relate to the building in proportion, type and size of opening, wherever visually apparent.

H LANDSCAPE FEATURES

1. The general intent is to preserve the existing or later integral landscape features that enhance the landmark property.
2. It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has a character, scale and street pattern quite different from that existing when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition feature between the landmark and its newer surroundings.

3. The existing landforms of the site shall not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the landmark or site. Additional landforms will only be considered if they will not obscure the exterior of the landmark.
4. Original layout and materials of the walks, steps, and paved areas should be maintained. Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that better site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will improve this without altering the integrity of the landmark.
5. Existing healthy plant materials should be maintained as long as possible. New plant materials should be added on a schedule that will assure a continuity in the original landscape design and its later adaptations.
6. Maintenance of, removal of, and additions to plant materials should consider maintaining existing vistas of the landmark.

## I. EXTERIOR LIGHTING

1. There are two aspects of exterior lighting:
  - a) Lighting fixtures as appurtenances to the building or elements of architectural ornamentation.
  - b) Quality of illumination on building exterior.
2. Wherever integral to the building, original lighting fixtures shall be retained. Supplementary illumination may be added where appropriate to the current use of the building.
3. New lighting shall conform to any of the following approaches as appropriate to the building and to the current or projected use:
  - a) Accurate representation of the original period, based on physical or documentary evidence.
  - b) Retention or restoration of fixtures which date from an interim installation and which are considered to be appropriate to the building and use.

- c) New lighting fixtures which are contemporary in design, and which illuminate the exterior of the building in a way which renders it visible at night and compatible with its environment.
- 4. If a fixture is to be replaced, the new exterior lighting shall be located where intended in the original design. If supplementary lighting is added, the new location shall fulfill the functional intent of the current use without obscuring the building form or architectural detailing.

J. REMOVAL OF LATER ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS

- 1. Each property will be separately studied to determine if later additions and alterations can, or should, be removed. It is not possible to provide one general guideline.
- 2. Factors that will be considered include:
  - a) Compatibility with the original property's integrity in scale, materials and character.
  - b) Historic association with the property.
  - c) Quality in the design and execution of the addition.
  - d) Functional usefulness.

## SPECIFIC STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

### Arlington Street Church

#### A. GENERAL

1. In view of the unaltered state of the church's exterior, the intent of the standards and criteria is to preserve its overall character, its use of materials and colors and its treatment of detail.
2. As all four facades are visible, at least in part, from public ways, the standards and criteria below shall be applicable to all exterior facades of the church. Some alterations may be permitted to the southwest facade, which contains the link between the church building and the office building.

#### B. WALLS

1. No new openings shall be allowed in exterior masonry walls. No existing openings shall be filled in or changed in size.
2. If new exits are required to meet the building code, such openings shall be treated in a manner similar to existing openings.
3. Neither paint nor treatment that will result in change of masonry color will be permitted on masonry walls.

#### C. ROOF

1. The roof shall be retained and repaired as necessary; where replacement materials are permitted, the new materials shall match the original in color, size, shape, texture, and installation details.
2. No additional openings, dormers, skylights, stacks, etc. will be allowed in the pitched sections of the roof.

#### D. WINDOWS

Existing window locations, colors, etc, shall be preserved in all openings. Consideration will, however, be given to the conversion of multiple light sash to single light sash if done in a consistent, architecturally acceptable manner.

#### E. STEEPLE

1. The existing tower and spire shall be retained. Missing elements may be replaced only with parts identical to the original.

2. The clock in the tower may be repaired or replaced as necessary.

#### F. DETAILS

All facade detail and ornamentation shall be retained.

#### G. ADDITIONS

1. No projections or additions outside the building's facade planes shall be permitted.
2. No additions in height shall be permitted.

#### H. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Signs shall conform to the general sign regulations adopted by the Back Bay Architectural Commission.
2. The short parapet wall at the sidewalk shall be retained and repaired as necessary. Landscaping must not obscure the view of the church, and may not include ivy or other such clinging vines on the exterior walls.
3. Exterior night lighting, if installed, should not be harsh floodlighting.
4. No structural attachment visible from a public way may be used to repel pigeons or other birds.

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